

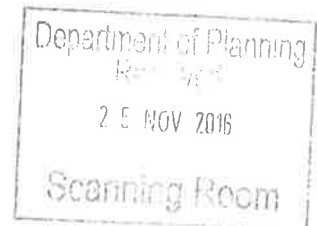
[REDACTED]  
BUTTERWICK NSW 2300



22 November 2016

DELETE MY PERSONAL INFORMATION BEFORE PUBLICATION - YES

Director – Resource Assessments  
Planning services  
Department of Planning & Environment  
GPO Box 39  
SYDNEY NSW 2001



**I OPPOSE THE MARTINS CREEK QUARRY EXPANSION**

Dear Sir/Madam

The roads used in Dungog, Port Stephens and Maitland LGAs by Daracon, (Buttai Gravel Pty Ltd) owner of Martins Creek Quarry, are not handling the current volume of traffic and need constant maintenance (which doesn't always occur in a timely manner) and is at a cost to the rate payers. These trucks (almost all of which are truck and dog combinations) are causing concern for ourselves and our neighbours. The roads affected by the Daracon operation are namely: Dungog Road, Gresford Road, Paterson Road, Tocal Road, Duns Creek Road and Butterwick Road.

We live in Butterwick Road and we are against the overuse of road transport for carting product from the quarry when the original consent for the quarry stated that 70% of the product MUST be carted by rail and that is why there is a rail siding for that purpose going into the quarry.

We use all these roads regularly and naturally are concerned about the safety aspects of an increase in heavy vehicle movements.

Recently this year a section of Butterwick Road to the South of our property was widened and straightened at a cost of \$600,000 to Port Stephens Council and already the fully laden trucks travelling South are running off the edge of the bitumen causing it to push sideways and upwards – "on a section of road that had been widened and straightened". It is not hard to see why this is happening if you follow the trucks because the camber of the road causes the rear end of the dog trailer on the truck to hang down the slope and be misaligned with the prime mover of the truck. This offset can be as much as 300mm on a vehicle travelling at 80km/hr.

It is impossible for these trucks to stay on the correct side of the road (not only on some bends when travelling at the speed limit) but at most intersections when the trucks cannot stay on the correct side of the road even when travelling well below the speed limit. The main cause for concern is the corner in Paterson at the Post Office because this corner gets ALL the road traffic coming from and going to the quarry. Other intersections of concern are at the corner of Paterson Road and Duns Creek Road and the corner of Duns Creek Road and Butterwick Road - which is a blind corner if you are travelling towards Duns Creek Road. Several times we have been confronted by a truck approaching this corner still over the centreline after turning into Duns Creek Road and had to stop give the truck room to turn into Butterwick Road. It is highly unlikely that these are isolated incidents.

While we do not have the noise and vibration issue from blasting that residents of Martins Creek and Vacy have, road noise is of concern to us as the unladen trucks going to the quarry

along Butterwick Road sound almost like explosions when the trucks hit potholes or run off the edges of the road. These trucks begin to travel on our road very early at around 5.30 am and their empty trays go off like huge drums.

School Buses pick up and drop off children along our road and there are no bays for the bus to pull into to get off the road. As well as this there are no pedestrian walkways and anyone walking along the road to catch a bus etc has to walk out on the road.

Butterwick Road has two speed zones – 80km/hr for the last two kilometres or so at the northern end and the remainder is 100km/hr. This speed has been allocated, I believe, at a time when the road was basically like many other country roads where the volume of traffic was very low and the risk of incidents between vehicles was greatly diminished. Now Daracon has officially proposed Butterwick Road as Quarry Haulage Route 2, in the Traffic Impact Assessment, the road has “officially” become part of a major transport route for the proposed mining operation of 1.5 million tonnes of gravel and rock per year, the speed limits are not appropriate and cannot be sustained before several things will happen:

- Escalating damage to the road will mean that it cannot be maintained in a safe condition due to budgetary constraints of the council
- An accident occurs between vehicles due to the above stated issues.
- An incident between pedestrians or recreational cyclists and a road vehicle / heavy transport vehicle.

#### **Other Safety Issues with Butterwick Road**

1. Many concealed driveways
2. Noise, like explosions when the truck and dogs go off the edge of the road, especially when trucks are empty.
3. We witness trucks constantly travelling over double white lines, they may be travelling at the speed limit but it is not a safe speed, especially in the 80km/hr zone going over the crest of the hill circa 5kms from the eastern end of the road.
4. The statement in the Traffic Impact Assessment that “The road provides a reasonably straight alignment with a number of vertical curves which reduce driver’s visibility and discourage speeding” is pure conjecture. We have not observed any reductions in speed as stated in this comment and neither does it have any factual data to support it.
5. The Traffic Impact Assessment shows the 85th percentile speed summary shows that 85% of the vehicles travelling in the 100km/hr zone exceed the speed limit. It is a pity the Traffic Impact Assessment did not complete a study in the 80km/hr zone as it may have had a worse result.

With regard to the hours of operation of the quarry, if Daracon was working under GC21 (Edition 2) RMS General Conditions of Contract for the NSW RMS there hours of work would be “between 7am and 6pm Monday to Friday inclusive but excluding proclaimed public holiday and the Contractor’s Roster Days off”. If Daracon wanted to work on a Saturday approval would have to be sought and if there were any community complaints work would have to cease.

The hours of operation being sort by Daracon for the Martins Creek Quarry are completely unfair and unacceptable to the community.

The clearing of 37ha will be a disaster for the flora and fauna currently in the existing area.

When the Flora and Fauna Management Plan talks of nudging habitat trees to the ground it shows little regard for the fauna. If these trees are to be removed they should be lowered to the ground giving the fauna more of a chance to survive.

The Flora and Fauna Management Plan does not cover any replacement of habits with nesting boxes for birds and other tree dwelling animals in the proposed offset areas.

The Flora and Fauna Management Plan states – “If immature fauna species are displaced and are deemed unable to care for themselves then they will be handed over to local wildlife carer organizations such as WIRES or Wildlife Arc for care and rehabilitation.” These two organisations, as far as we’re aware are not local wildlife rescue organisations. This may be because the company responsible for the Flora and Fauna Management Plan is itself situated in East Gosford.

“Noise can be annoying, interfere with speech, disturb sleep or interrupt work. Prolonged exposure to loud noise can also result in increased heart rate, anxiety, hearing loss and other health effects.”

Quote from the NSW EPA website

Daracon’s proposed Option No 3 appears to disregard the local Martins Creek community with the proposed increase in working hours which will bring more noise, vibration, dust and health issues.

Option No 3 disadvantages the Paterson village with increased truck and rail movements through the middle of the village. Daracon’s proposed intersection “improvements” at the corner of Duke and King Street will disadvantage businesses restricting access and limit customer parking. When the railway gates are closed currently there is a queue of trucks and other traffic on both sides of the rail line which causes extra unwanted congestion.

Paterson’s accommodation businesses have an uphill battle attracting prospective customers when they read reviews on the internet telling them not to stop in Paterson on mid week days because of the noise of the trucks.

Many other communities on the proposed traffic routes through neighbouring LGAs are also burdened with the increase of truck movement, noise and bills for road and bridge maintenance.

Trucks travelling from the quarry may cross several timber and steel bridges which need to be maintained by the NSW State Government. These include but may not be limited to the Gostwyck Bridge (1928), Dunmore Bridge (1899), Belmore Bridge (1964) and the Paterson Bridge circa 1880. These bridges were not built with the projected volume and weight of traffic in mind.

I have also witnessed contractor’s trucks with trailers (not Daracon’s) heading along Martins Creek Road toward the Martins Creek Quarry. If these trucks are heading to the quarry they will be travelling on a road with a 12 tonne maximum load limit over two bridges crossing the main northern railway line.

Approximately 10 years ago a development application was sort by Mahogany Ridge Developments to develop a high class tourist facility at the top of the mountain in Duns Creek Road. The development was eventually knocked back in the Land and Environment Court but one condition that was to be imposed if the development was approved was that widening of Butterwick Road (including tree removal) should take place to handle the increased volume of road traffic. This traffic would have mainly been passenger vehicles including small shuttle buses to transport people to and from the airport.

The width, length and sheer size of the truck and dog combinations that transport the product from the Martins Creek Quarry would certainly require a similar condition imposed before any approval takes place.

**It appears that Daracon is unwilling to consider transporting a large proportion of the products via railway infrastructure, which would alleviate the product being transported on unsuitable local roads, as evidenced by their stated requirement to load product 24 hours a day 7 days a week. There must be a solution and rail trucks should only be loaded during "normal working hours" 7:00am to 6:00pm Monday to Friday. If this requires an extension to the spur line in the quarry to facilitate more rail trucks then so be it. Daracon should not be able to hold affected communities in contempt as demonstrated by their refusal to comply with the current consent conditions.**

**I have not made a reportable political donation.**

**Yours sincerely**







